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FROM: Brussels DEPARTMENT OF STATE Control 12031
Rec'd April 29, 1950
1:38 p.m.

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 703, April 29, 3 p.m. 0023

Cabinet crisis reached complete impasse after midnight last night when it was announced PSC and Liberals were unable to come to an agreement. Immediate background as follows:

At conclusion Liberal meeting yesterday morning they announced approval of protocol re return of King as a basis for discussion toward forming a PSC-Liberal government but indicated lack of support for Van Zeeland as Prime Minister. In afternoon PSC met declaring support for Van Zeeland, their desire to form coalition with Liberals, Van Zeeland's withdrawal owing Liberal opposition and agreement propose another name for Prime Minister. As Eyskens indicated he did not wish to undertake task, the names of Duvieusart, Minister of Economy, and Segers, Minister of Communications, were mentioned.

Last night PSC members of Eyskens caretaker government and Liberal members met in separate groups and negotiations continued between them. At one o'clock in the morning after hours of haggling, these groups left and Van Zeeland obviously exhausted announced that two parties unable to reach an agreement and he would today make his last report to the Regent in whose hands the ultimate decision rests.

[redacted]

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755.11/4-2950 DC/R Central Files

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Though obviously Royal question revolves around King's past and future character, since the popular consultation, it has become almost more a question of a struggle for power between the pro and anti King factions and especially a duel between Spaak and Van Zeeland the two ablest leaders in Belgium. Each of these leaders has suffered from this prolonged and acrimonious fight. This is unfortunate as regards Belgium's influence on international affairs since they are the two outstanding authorities on foreign affairs in this country and for the foreseeable future one or the other is the logical Foreign Minister depending on political complexion of government. As previously reported there is virtually no difference of opinion between Spaak and Van Zeeland on Foreign Affairs. [redacted] B-1

[redacted]

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5/2/50, 3 p.m.
CORRECTED PAGE 3

-3- #703, April 29, 3 p.m., from Brussels. Control 12031

[redacted] B-1

On the other hand, the Belgian people are accustomed to witnessing the game of politics and the passage of time and the cooling-off period afforded by the general election will, I hope lead to amelioration of the asperity which the crisis has arousedo

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OFFICE OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
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-3-#703, April 29, 3 p.m., from Brussels.

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[redacted] B-1

MURPHY

MJF:LQB

FW 755.11/4-2950

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

199

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EXCISE (OVER)

SECURITY : CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO : Department of State OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS 755.11/6-1950

FROM : BRUSSELS 822 June 19 1950

REF : Brussels' Despatch 818 of June 16, 1950

SUBJECT : RECALL OF BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO ITALY DURING KING LEOPOLD'S VISIT TO ROME

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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RECD JUNE 26

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EUR INDEX

Supplementing Embassy despatch No. 816 of June 16, M. André MOTTE, Belgian Ambassador to Italy, with whom I had served at Sofia and Lisbon, called to see me today.

[redacted]

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755.11/6-1950

I have always found M. Motte a man of courage and character, and during the darkest hours after the collapse of the Belgian and French armies, his loyalty to the Allied cause never wavered for a moment. After the rupture of Bulgarian-Belgian relations in 1940, when the Bulgarian Government conveyed to him the German message that the war was now over as far as Belgium was concerned and that Motte would be given every facility to return home, Motte replied that he regarded this message as a personal insult, and that he was returning to the free Allied territory to continue the fight. At the same time, Motte's colleague in Athens passed through Sofia and tried to dissuade him, saying that the game was up and that it was foolish not to accept the inevitable.

I recall with respect and admiration Motte's courage throughout this period, and when I saw him off at the station in Sofia on the special train which conveyed Allied diplomats to Istanbul, his head was high, and he told me with pride and pleasure that on receiving a message of personal regards from King BORIS through the Bulgarian Chef de Protocol, he told that functionary to inform the King, whom Motte had known for many years, that, in view of Boris' attitude toward the Germans, Motte flatly refused to accept the message.

HUGH MILLARD
Counselor of Embassy

HMillard/mjr/mae
File 361.1

JUN 22 1950

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